The

COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs

FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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The Success of the "Economy Bloc"

JUST how much economy was the motive of the late Congress, and how much politics, is indicated by the fact that it appropriated $10,472,354,914 for the fiscal year 1940, which is about $260,000,000 more than President Roosevelt asked for in his budget message, and the largest amount appropriated for any peace-time year in our history. One cannot help suspecting that it will be many a long year before we see sizable reductions in the budget, although either higher taxes or better times may reduce the deficit or even turn it into a surplus. Regardless of principles and campaign oratory, 925,000 federal government jobs are a lot of jobs, and politicians do hate to eliminate jobs. The complexion of the times has forced the federal government to spend money in order to keep the economic machine going; once that process is begun, you cannot stop it without risking a collapse. They perhaps do not realize it yet themselves, but Republicans, if they return to power, will find that that is true. But from the spending records of the last Congress, with an "economy bloc" in the saddle, it looks as though they do know it. Not only that, but the first screams of distress at true government economizing would come from the very chambers of commerce who are now so eagerly advocating economy. The most extraordinary part of Congress's achievement was its refusal even to consider the spending-lending program, perhaps one of the soundest of all New Deal recovery ideas, approved even by conservative Wall-Streeters. Perhaps it was the Washington heat! But of one thing it is possible to be sure: the revolt in Congress was not against spending; it was rather a preliminary personal skirmish against FDR. If the home-folks seem to approve, the skirmish will turn into a campaign.

Spending and Politics

Harry Bridges Takes the Stand

IT IS always hard to know from the record of a trial whether the witness has developed his own line in his testimony, or whether the line has been worked out for him by counsel. The testimony of Harry Bridges in his trial for deportation currently being conducted at Angel Island, San Francisco, has been supremely skilful. It has been frank enough to carry the idea that Bridges is entirely sincere; it has carefully avoided conveying any implication that Bridges believes in the program of the Communist Party, except in so far as that program has certain elements in common with his own. He admits having received help from the Stalinist C.P., but denies emphatically that he approves of the use of force in social reform. He would use economic and political weapons, not bombs and rifles. With much that he said, especially in negative criticism, one cannot help being sympathetic. On the face of it, it is true. Yet that does not finally prove that Bridges—or any one else—has not or would not play a communist game. That is the funny thing about denying that you are a communist. If you *are* one, the denial means little. So, from the point of view of convincing the opposition, it is a waste of time to deny that accusation. Mr. Bridges admits that he accepted help from the communists. That is a dangerous game to play; perhaps even Mr. Bridges does not realize quite how dangerous it can be. Yet one also cannot help having the strong feeling that a lot of big corporations would like to see Mr. Bridges branded with any malodorous label that will stick, and "communist" does very nicely. If Mr. Bridges accepted communist help, it was as much the employers' fault as his own. As is often true in labor questions, the best thing seems to be to give labor the benefit of the doubt until certain knowledge is available.

Clever Testimony

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Europe Approaches Another Danger Point

ADDED up, the various news items on European diplomatic and military preparations form an aggregate that is overwhelming.

Show of Terrifying Force

To think that in the impoverished Balkans alone 2,000,000 men will be under arms in the next few weeks. Germany and Italy's 3,000,000 soldiers will be matched man for man by the armed forces of England, France and Poland, while the Soviet armies remain vast but incalculable. Meanwhile European centers such as Berlin, London, Paris and Turin rehearse civilian air raid precautions. The French Maginot line is manned for action. British anti-aircraft and coast defenses are operating on a 24-hour basis. The German fleet has orders to stick close to home. French and British fleets are acting in concert. Various air corps are engaged in spectacular maneuvers. The cost alone of such rehearsing raises grave doubts whether such a state of crisis can continue as a permanent state of affairs. Italy is said already to be on the verge of economic collapse. Meanwhile the Axis is trying to draw Japan into an outright military alliance at the very moment of military consultations of unguessed proportions by French, British and Russian staffs. There is no consensus where the next Axis move will be, Danzig or the Netherlands, the Balkans or toward the Ukraine. Last minute dispatches indicate another serious outburst brewing at Danzig and that Jugoslavia is manifesting determination to withstand being drawn into German-Italian war plans. But it is obvious that if the present danger point passes without an explosion a viable solution is no less essential. The Powers must somehow arrive at some method of seeking an answer which is in harmony with Pius XII's formula of "justice and peace through the road of sacrifice which leads us all to renounce rather than demand."

Subsiding Spain

CONFLICTING and confusing and extremely meager reports upon what is going on in Spain continue to appear in the press.

What Goes On?

Most Catholic papers are still discussing the question in terms of the participants in the recent bloody and heart-rending civil war; most of the secular press slants its news somewhat the same way. Those who were totally partisans of the Franco cause are still engaged in justifying its perfection; those who favored the loyalists naturally take delight in making the most out of Franco's troubles. So it is very difficult to arrive at anything like an objective estimate of what is really going on and what is likely to happen in the future. It does seem as though it were time to realize that the war is over. It is somewhat less than sensible to regard everything that happens almost exclusively in terms of whether one or the other side in the civil war was right or wrong. That is certainly important, but right now the fate of the Spanish people is also important, and the part Spain is to play in the world.

On that score private as well as public information indicates that Franco has a tremendous task ahead of him. The man-power of his country has been greatly reduced, both by death and by the emigration of refugees and by the large number of men who are still confined in jails or concentration camps. There is a tremendous debt owing both Italy and Germany and there is the question of how that is to be paid. There is the task of "cleaning up" after the destruction wrought by the war. And there is undoubtedly a degree of dissension within the ranks of the victorious forces. The Phalanx has always been a radical party on the social and economic side, in the same sense that Hitler and Mussolini have been radical, much as the pinks hate to admit it. Naturally the monarchist elements are more conservative in such matters. And there are many Spaniards who feel that Spain's neighbors are her most logical friends —France, Portugal, England—rather than Italy and Germany, who may be suspected of having some ulterior motives in siding with Franco. Then, too, there is a strong element that would have Spain take a policy of complete neutrality in Europe, developing her own culture within her own borders and allowing no one to exploit her in any way (England and France can exploit just as neatly as anyone). All this means problems for Franco. Now that he is the victor one can only hope for the sake of the Spanish people that he will be inspired in his policies to the point where there will be for many years no further fighting in the unhappy Iberian peninsula.

Chagrin of a Conqueror

THE CONQUEROR posing for his portrait in the attitude symbolic of domination must feel considerable surprise when the neck

Some Tongue Sticking

under his victorious heel twists to allow the visage attached to the neck to stick its tongue out at him. To the surprise will be added downright annoyance if by some mischance this irreverent gesture at ineluctable might gets painted into the portrait itself. This is a fair parable of what is happening in the Reich-shadowed land which used to be the Republic of Czechoslovakia. Of course, the Czech resistance has a deeper and more positive motive than that of graveling the conqueror. It is an assertion of that independent spirit and instinct for liberty which made the little republic a genuine political reality, and the existence of which was derided

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and denied by the Sudetenlanders who worked so hard to compass the present state of affairs. But the very fact that the resistance is not the dramatic resistance of armed force but must express itself in the casual personal contacts of life seems to lend it, by contrast, a kind of agreeable impudence.

Under circumstances not at all evocative of light-hearted mischief, the Czechs manage to paint under the "Jewish Shop" signs their own personal reassurances to the shopkeepers; to refrain in large numbers from buying from Germans and even (under various ingenious pretexts) from selling to them; to remove, with quiet industry, night after night, the German lettering put by law above ancient Bohemian streets. Nor should there be omitted from this roll of honor the Slovak anti-German statesman who managed to get a smart attack on official propaganda printed in the organ of the Propaganda Minister. Nobody can believe, of course, that these manifestations in themselves will deter the Reich from tying the protectorate ever more firmly into its own economic plans. But like the more specifically Catholic resistance we recently noted, they cause the Reich chagrin and uneasiness. This is evident in the forthcoming shifts in the protectorate personnel — shifts designed to counterbalance the Sudeten influence. For it cannot be doubted that, on both sides, the Hitler-Henlein honeymoon is over. Meanwhile, in the republic that was, morale and spirit continue to be maintained by a kind of miracle that lends to quiet defiance a touch of the genuinely amusing.

Resistance to Mechanization

A DISPATCH from Kansas recently informed readers of the New York *Times* that the one beast of burden that has yet to succumb to the exacting demands of agricultural mass-production is the mule. For one thing it is quite obvious that the sharecropper has no cash for tractor fuel so the animal still holds sway in large cotton-growing areas. Besides the ease with which the farmer can produce the fodder he needs, there is the all important question of fertilizer for his fields. Again the mule has the tractor beat. And for the time being at least it would seem that horses and mules would have an important place on the family-size subsistence farm. The process of producing gasoline from agricultural products is so far from the practical stage at present that tractors necessarily involve cash expenditures for fuel. Chemical fertilizers as far as we know still defy attempts to produce them on the home farm. And so the mule still has an honorable rôle to play in our rural economy. May his virtues gain the renown proverbially attached to his obstinacy, and may that characteristic enable him to continue to survive.

The Stubborn Mule

Pan-American Literary Piracy

NEWS comes from Montevideo that jurists from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay have proposed a revision of American international law on copyrights to permit reprints from any periodical or publication providing only that the name of the original publication is cited. One reason for the proposal is that it would regularize a practice that is quite common throughout Latin-America. Another is that it would disseminate "culture" throughout the Americas, as if the stories pirated from our "pulps" could conceivably fulfil any such function. Finally the argument proceeds that there are a great many people whose livelihood depends upon such publishing activities. Offhand this would seem to be a typical sample of the specious reasoning of our day. What about the principles involved? What of the justice due the author and the publisher who has purchased his brain children? Why only in the Americas is literary piracy accepted? These are questions worth pondering in the western family of nations which has been urged to set itself up before the whole world as an example of fair play, brotherliness and of orderly and legal methods of handling all international questions.

A Strange Reasoning

Old Wine in a New Bottle

NEWS comes from Detroit that the *Christian Front* has changed its name and address. This four-year-old monthly "of social reconstruction published and edited by Catholic laymen" has left Villanova and moved to the automobile capital where it will take the name *Christian Social Action*. The reason for the change is thus explained by the editor in a release to the press: "The original name" has "been stolen by an anti-Semitic group active in the East. . . . Catholicism and anti-Semitism can have nothing in common. Our magazine is devoted to promoting a program of Christian social reconstruction in accord with the encyclicals of the Popes. We want nobody to confuse us with a group who stir up racial hatred." Those who have followed the fortunes of the *Christian Front* in its Eastern manifestation will await the first fruits from the Middle West with curiosity and in the hope that the new magazine will strive as valiantly as the old for an integral Catholicism and for social reconstruction in our country. There are many ways of fighting that battle. The *Christian Front* (now *Christian Social Action*) has generally preferred ways which do not always please scholarly or reflective readers. But the proverb about skinning cats puts no preference on any way; they all have their usefulness in the diverse world in which we work.

No More *Christian Front*

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New Houses and New Men

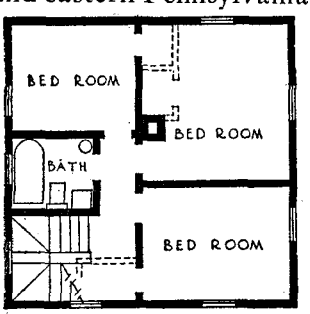
Nova Scotia miners raise themselves nearer security through cooperation.

By **Edward Skillin, Jr.**

TO ANYONE at all familiar with coal mining districts in eastern Pennsylvania, communities such as Reserve Mines and Glace Bay on the outskirts of Sydney, Nova Scotia, present a familiar picture. Towering above everything is the apparatus of the colliery belching forth its columns of dense black smoke. The surrounding countryside is covered with a beautiful mantle of shrubs and squat scrub trees. In contrast the mining communities are squalid and ugly, a symbol of the capitalistic exploitation of the gifts of creation. Streets of a characteristic blackish brown dirt are pitted with holes, ramshackle stores, dwellings and other buildings scattered over this terrain of dark dust testify to the poverty and drabness of the life of the community. No wonder miners are proverbially hard drinkers.

Many of the mining companies' houses in the vicinity of Sydney would compare more than favorably with similar dwellings in the coal regions of the United States. But even the best of them have little to recommend them. They are two-family affairs completely alike in color and design—either dark green shingles coated with dust or dingy unpainted clapboards. The houses are from 70 to 100 years old and without inside toilets or other modern conveniences. Backyards are so many square feet of dirt and coal dust mixed. In fact, the coal dust from the nearby mine seeps in everywhere. For such a house the current monthly rental is $10.

During the winter and other slack seasons the men work only two or three "shifts" or days per week. Then the problem of mere existence is added to that of footless idleness. There is always the danger that the owners will decide to close down the mines, as they have done in West Virginia and eastern Pennsylvania in so many cases, thereby leaving the miner and his family completely stranded. This is threatened for 1940 at Reserve Mines, itself, the heart of the Antigonish movement in Cape Breton.

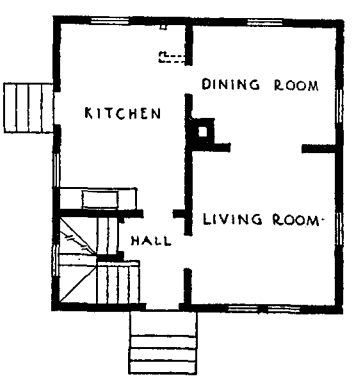


The work among the coal miners and their unpromising environment serves as an excellent example of what actually can be done with the Antigonish cooperative technique. With local variations it should be widely applicable in the States.

How it works

In most cases, it would seem, a group of men first decide to form a credit union. After months of preparatory study involving a small study circle that meets once each week, a group fulfills all the requirements and secures a charter from the government. Each miner subscribes—either outright or ordinarily in instalments — $5 capital, and agrees to deposit from his wages a certain fixed sum—say $.50 a week. His credit union permits him to borrow up to $50 without collateral at a low rate of interest. Higher amounts call for collateral and approval by the credit committee of the credit union to whom he must demonstrate that he wants the money for a useful purpose and can with his present resources pay back the loan with interest in a year's time. Studying how to form a credit union, having a say in the management of its affairs and experiencing directly the possibilities in group action are first steps in economic education and toward economic independence. It also means that many miners have money and establish saving habits for the first time in their humdrum lives. And from the profits on these loans they receive interest on their capital and deposits at several times the rate of the savings banks, which today have fallen upon evil times.

The next step in economic education and toward economic independence varies with the local group and its problems. At Reserve Mines the men decided to undertake a cooperative store and again underwent the necessary training. By the time the store opened, some of them had become so aroused by the possibilities that lay before them that one of the men told me that for eighteen months he and some of his associates on the executive board devoted three or four night a week—in fact, most of their leisure time—



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to checking over every one of each day's sales receipts. Today the Reserve Mines Cooperative store is a steadily growing concern with over 200 members, about one-third of the number of those enrolled in the local credit union.

The desire for knowledge grows tremendously with participation in these activities. A good part of the miners were taken from school to work as pit boys at the age of ten to twelve. Few of them have gone beyond the eighth grade, many never completed elementary school. They now begin to read all about economics and finance, about politics and sociology, about religion and international affairs. Father Tompkins's fondest dream is the establishment of people's libraries to meet the demand for knowledge in every village and town.

All this must be taken into account as a background for the next step—getting out of the drab mining company houses and building attractive houses of their own. For the men who have undertaken the three housing projects at Tompkinsville, Sterling and Dominion had the advantage of this preliminary education in cooperation to start off with. Miss Mary Arnold, who had been head of the cooperative restaurants in New York, came to Sydney to supervise the new housing projects.

Meeting once each week in some miner's cottage and later in Miss Arnold's budget house, a group of ten miners studied out every aspect of the problem for a full year and a half. Each session was conducted in strict parliamentary fashion (thanks to the miners' training at union meetings), and included a five-minute talk on some phase of the cooperative movement by one of the men. First they took up where the money was coming from and what it would cost to build and maintain each house. Then in turn such questions as the legal factors involved, planning the house and its furnishings, actual construction, color and design. Finally, each miner constructed in cardboard a model of his new home.

No subsidy was involved. The venture was considered a good business risk, but bank loans on real estate are forbidden by Canadian banking laws. Therefore the loan of $1,500 on each home (at 3½%) had to be secured from the government. Each man was called upon to put up $100 cash, but savings in construction reduced this to $50, a sum borrowed from his own credit union. Roughly the actual cost at Tompkinsville was $1,600 per house: $1,450 for materials, $50 for the land, and $100 for expert labor—a supervising carpenter for squaring concrete forms for the foundations, a plumber and a mason. One of the members of the group is an electrician.

To carry these charges each man has to pay his interest on the loan from the credit union (an item more than covered by patronage dividends from the cooperative store) together with a regular monthly payment of $12.15. This sum includes $2.50 per month paid into the group reserve fund set aside for any homeowner or family hit by an accident in the mines. The remaining $9.65 goes for taxes, insurance, interest and amortization within 25 years.

What the houses are like

Each of the houses at Tompkinsville has a half-acre plot, providing light and air and space quite in contrast with mining company row. In addition there are five to six acres held in common by the home owners for future cultivation. To get within the budget each house had to have one of the following sets of dimensions: 22 x 26, 24 x 24, or 23 x 25. The designs are simple and somewhat uniform, but utilize available space to the full. Variety is obtained by landscaping and contrasting color schemes. The little community looks somewhat bare today, but in another year the shrubs and flowers and fruit trees already planted will have their effect. Each family in its first few months has also planted a sizable vegetable garden under expert supervision; each has a pig or two fattening for the fall. Yet Tompkinsville is only ten minutes away from the colliery. Sterling and Dominion, with twelve and fourteen houses respectively now under construction, have more beautiful outlooks, in fact Dominion's 19 acres go right down to the water's edge.

Most of the Tompkinsville homes are naturally rather sparsely furnished as yet. Heated by stoves, open fireplaces and pipeless furnaces, the neat homes are equipped with a modern bathroom, electric light, and modern kitchen equipment. Curtains and painted trim and attractive wall papers give a most cheery effect to the domestic interiors. Visitors are apparently welcome at any hour of the day or night.

I talked to a number of the men in their completed homes or working on the site of construction. Hardly one of them had done any real carpentry before, but they have proved to be naturally handy with carpenters' tools. Digging the foundation and putting up the concrete forms for the foundation were largely an individual job, but pouring the concrete was a distinctly community affair. In fact, the men from the three housing projects pitched in to help each other over this critical stage. Otherwise, except for the plumbing and electrical fixtures and the supervision noted above, each man built his house with his own hands from cellar to roof.

The financial and other affairs of the Tompkinsville houses are run by a board of directors of which every home-owner is a member—a direct economic democracy. The children of the community, who already show the effects of exercise in more rural surroundings, have formed their own little group with weekly dues and various duties such as policing the grounds, helping with the landscaping, and tending their own junior

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vegetable garden plot. One of the men told me that when he stepped out to work on his garden at four o'clock the other morning he was sure he would be the first on the scene, but another enthusiast was already hard at it across the street.

The improvement of the material conditions of the families at Tompkinsville, whom Miss Arnold believes are a good cross-section rather than a picked group is considerable. To have built such substantial houses at such a figure is a remarkable achievement for Miss Arnold and her associates. But far greater than the material victories that have been won in the face of no mean obstacles is the new vision manifested by the men. Idleness and drabness and the restless quest for any kind of diversion are no longer a problem. More and more the men are coming to feel they are masters of their own economic destiny; they have in a few short years climbed out of a hopeless round of dull existence with no future but the poorhouse; they are looking for new worlds to conquer.

When the mine is down to two or three "shifts" ($6-10) a week, there will be plenty of potatoes in the bin, put-up vegetables in the larder, and, eventually, a sizable store of canned fruits and preserves to reduce expenditures for food to a minimum. And if the mine closes down the men are unafraid. They plan to go into poultry-raising, agriculture on the common plot, or the cranberry business, or something else. Who knows but some day a group of them may be operating a mine themselves.

The face of Reserve Mines and vicinity will not be changed much by these simple housing projects and the others they inspire in the immediate future. Most of the people will continue to be poor. But face to face conversation with the men who have built or are now building their own homes indicates that the tide of dehumanization which set in with the industrial revolution can be and is being reversed in even so unpromising an environment. Indeed the only way really to appreciate the extent of this achievement is to talk to the men who have accomplished these things.

Transplanted into the United States the Antigonish plan naturally would undergo considerable changes of detail depending on local conditions. What we would need to get a similar program started, and we have already delayed far too long, is the enlisting of native leadership among the clergy and laity of all faiths. These leaders, like Father Tompkins and Father Coady, like Dr. J. D. Nelson MacDonald of the United Church of Canada in Baddeck and Rev. Mr. Mackenzie of Ingonish, and laymen like A. B. MacDonald of Antigonish and Alex MacIntyre of Glace Bay, would give their untiring energies to the movement. We would also need a score of regional educational and administrative centers like St. Francis Xavier University of Antigonish.

Mexican Presidential Timber

The candidates for Mexico's highest political office—their personalities and points of view.

By James A. Magner

THE LAW which requires candidates for the Presidency to state their intentions one year in advance of elections has brought to a head the "political futurism" of Mexico. Five candidates—all soldiers—have been entered into the field: Generals Manuel Avila Camacho, Francisco J. Mugica, Miguel Sanchez Tapia, Gildardo Magaña, and Juan Andreu Almazan. President Cardenas is definitely standing by the anti-reelectionist principle as "inborn in the conscience of the majority of the Mexican people," and will not run again. Whether he intends to endorse Avila Camacho as the official candidate of the PRM (Mexican Revolutionary Party) or some other, and whether he intends to play the rôle of a new First Chief behind the Presidency, in the manner of Calles, or abandon political control, are questions which no one seems able to answer.

This much can be said, that in all the history of Mexico no Presidential campaign has been inaugurated under more hopeful auspices. The Government, which has normally imposed its candidates upon the people, is apparently ready to allow some measure of political freedom, and Cardenas has promised that a new law of federal elections will be drafted with this end in view. There are no political prisoners in the jails, the frontiers have been thrown open to expatriates and at no other time has the press been given so much freedom of expression. In the words of the President, "There ought now to have been created in the people the consciousness of its rights and the direction of its duties"; the time has arrived, "when the different tendencies, even reactionary, of the possible groups organized under the grant of civic liberties can enjoy a full campaign and

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enter into the electoral fight with guarantees equal to those required for the ideals of the revolutionaries."

In spite of considerable jockeying, and a common hesitancy to state their platforms, the candidates have shown a disposition to rest their case with the people; and although there have been some outbursts of violence among petty political chieftains, and there still remains a large scepticism among conservative elements regarding freedom of the vote, it is probable that all Mexico will have something to say about its next President.

An important sign of the development of civic independence has been the boldness of attack from many sectors upon the PRM or Mexican Revolutionary Party, which, as the successor of Calles's PNR (*Partido Nacional Revolucionario*), has served as the national political holding company, like the official party in Germany, Italy and Russia. A number of independent political groups have dared to lift their voices in protest against the official character maintained by the PRM, pointing out that its intervention as a government organ in the political campaign is a violation of the constitution; and they have demanded that all political parties functioning in the Republic be allowed to stand in the same plane of equality.

Within the party itself, dissatisfaction with the personal ambitions of its head, Luis I. Rodriguez, has led to his resignation and to the appointment of General Alberto Jara, formerly a communist, a man of small present consequence. Grievances with Rodriguez came to a head early in the year, when both Mugica and Sanchez Tapia threatened to bolt the party as a result of manoeuvers to make Avila Camacho the official candidate. Their disgust at this premature designation of a man whom they regarded simply as a rival has been intensified by the further endorsement accorded Avila Camacho by Vicente Lombardo Toledano, in the name of his radical labor union, the CTM (Confederation of Mexican Workers).

Avila Camacho

Acting with a type of initiative that has made him obnoxious to a wide sector of Mexican opinion and pledging the votes of the 1,155,675 members of his syndicates, Toledano asserted: "Our pact with Cardenas has been a revolutionary pact, not a written one. We have stood with Cardenas because he represented the popular eagerness for a rectification of the policy of Mexico: we have stood by him with faith, enthusiasm and integrity, because he has completed a revolutionary program in Mexico. Many previous heads have compromised. Cardenas is an exception; he is the same today as yesterday. . . . The CTM has been conscious of its support of Cardenas and desires his policy to continue. Its vote, which we have announced, indicates this, because it is necessary to continue the work of Cardenas, looking for a man identified with Cardenas, honest, who will continue the work of the present government."

In addition, Avila Camacho has been pledged 1,826,515 votes of the CNC (National Farm Confederation). The CROM (Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers), once led by Luis Morones, remains divided between Avila Camacho and Magaña. Meanwhile, it is important to recall, Cardenas has announced no designation of his own.

If Camacho is actually the man to carry on the work of Cardenas, Mexico may well see the completion of a plan to convert it into a nation of communist cells under a national socialist management. Few persons any longer doubt the integrity of Cardenas's determination. From an opposition standpoint, expressed in a memorial of the Revolutionary Committee of National Reconstruction of July 11, 1939, this includes: "The definite and unilateral protection given by the Government to the groups which more or less frankly fight for the destruction of the constitutional régime, proclaiming the 'implantation of the democracy of workers and the socialist régime'; the apparent intention of the party and of the Government to convert citizenship into a collective function, in flagrant violation of our supreme law; the desire of the party and of the Government to establish 'the organization and collective exploitation of the *ejido* (Indian agricultural community), eliminating the small land-parcel system'; the official policy of the systematic nationalization of industry with the purpose of organizing it also into collective form; the inclusion of communist principles in the program of the party, which is a personal creation of the President of the Republic; the sectarian and communizing policy of the Government in relation with the Red Spanish immigrants; official toleration in the face of anti-constitutional and communizing workers militias, and finally the establishment of Marxist education throughout the Republic against the absolute desire of the immense majority of the people. . . ."

The most difficult of the problems facing Cardenas's successor, however, are in the economic order. The distribution of *ejidal* lands to the Indians on a communistic basis has been practically completed, so that little remains of the old haciendas. But, despite the fact that these lands have been seized without payment or promise of payment to the Mexican proprietors, the Government is now tremendously in debt, and the experiment has proved disastrous to the national economy. The same can be said as a result of the expropriation of the petroleum industry and the nationalization of the railroads. The precarious state of national credit has been further demonstrated by its dependence upon the purchase of

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Mexican silver by the United States Government. To some slight extent, Avila Camacho seems to have taken cognizance of the difficulties, and in a recent address at Cuernavaca declared himself for individual patrimony of land functioning through cooperatives rather than the communal system of *ejidos* promoted by Cardenas. This in itself signifies something of a conservative trend and has gained for his candidacy a new section of support which was previously alienated by the backing given him by Toledano and the CTM.

Manuel Avila Camacho himself, unlike his brother Maximino, governor of Puebla, is not generally regarded as a strong personality, and until lately he has built up his campaign on a program of almost complete silence. Although Secretary of National Defense before entering the primaries, he lacks the normal military background, so that the Mexicans, with quick, sardonic humor, have dubbed him "the Unknown Soldier" and "the Virgin Sword." Many observers are inclined to think that he will devote his best efforts towards protecting the men of the party who have become rich during the process of the revolution; but this may involve a struggle for influence between his brother and General Cardenas.

Francisco J. Mugica

In point of utterances at least, his rival, Francisco J. Mugica, former minister of communications, has shown himself less reticent and more radical. As a seminarian in his youth, following the tradition of Juarez, Mugica has shown a predilection for the State-Church question. He sees no abridgment of the essential rights of the Church in the constitutional principles of Mexico and is opposed to any change, as restoring "a sovereign moral responsibility to the clergy." It is impossible, he maintains, "that in a State there can exist two sovereignties." Referring to Article 3 of the constitution, which makes socialist education compulsory and forbids the Church from conducting schools or engaging in education, he insists that this precept is not anti-religious, as has been stated, but simply liberates childhood from "the erroneous teachings" of the confessional schools and provides instruction in "scientific precepts."

Relative to expropriation, notably of the mines, Mugica recently declared: "When the same conditions prevail which led to the expropriation of the petroleum industry, when any other industry runs through a course like that of petroleum, this industry ought to follow the same fate." It will be remembered that he was one of the leaders in writing Article 27 of the constitution of 1917, to nationalize the soil and subsoil of the nation. When asked whether he is a communist, Mugica replied that he has never been affiliated with the Communist Party but that he is no enemy of the communists, since he feels that Article 123 of the constitution is the "minimum program" of Marx. It may be noted that the Communist Party of Mexico has not yet adopted any candidate but has simply pledged itself to the unification of popular front groups and to the PRM, declaring itself opposed to the candidacy of Sanchez Tapia and to all others whom it regards as "the agents of reaction."

Less radical than Mugica, Sanchez Tapia, who likewise started as a seminarian (rumored to have received the sub-deaconate), has assumed the rôle of an opposition candidate, as result of the rising star of Avila Camacho. In somewhat the same category is General Magaña, who has resigned the governorship of Michoacan to enter the race. A one-time ally of the agrarian guerrilla, Emilio Zapata, Magaña is opposed to communism and favors the individual ownership of small properties. If Camacho fails to get the backing of Cardenas, Magaña may well enter the first line of importance.

Juan Andreu Almazan

The most interesting, however, and in many ways the most hopeful development of the primaries has been the announced independent candidacy of General Juan Andreu Almazan, governor of Nuevo Leon. Dynamic, conservative, wealthy, regarded as a good man for business, a Catholic, ready to acknowledge religious rights, he has thus far grown immensely in popularity through the same tactics as Avila Camacho, namely, silence, allowing his backers to build up the campaign for him. Although there has been some talk of his entering the lists among the candidates of the PRM, this field is already completely filled, and Alamazan's qualifications seem to have small place in the radical program of this party. On the other hand, provided there is a free vote—*and this is an all-important proviso!*—Almazan, as opposition candidate, can count on the large conservative vote that has been submerged these many years, including a considerable section of small property owners, the business and industrial interests, the mellowed revolutionaries who have been disillusioned with radicalism, anti-communist organizations like the PRAC (Anti-Communist Revolutionary Party), and the large Catholic population which is beginning to emerge from the catacombs. Moreover, he can profit by the undeniable and disastrous errors committed in the social program of the present régime.

With regard to Catholic participation in politics, the organization of Catholic Action has rigidly fixed the line of civic enterprise, and officials who wish to enter the political campaign are required to resign their offices in Catholic Action. This has left the way open to considerable freedom of activity, without compromise or embarrassment. As a result, Catholics have taken heart

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again, in the hope that their aspirations may have some external validity.

As the most probable choice of the PRM, Avila Camacho will automatically have the votes of the army, as well as those pledged by the radical labor organizations. In addition, he will have all the backing of the political organization evolved by Cardenas in his revolutionary program, unless the rival candidates in the primaries withdraw their support.

Nevertheless, a swing towards the right seems inevitable, in view of widespread discontent as well as from the standpoint of safeguarding social gains and saving the national economy; and Mexicans are becoming more and more aware of the gravity of the situation.

Indicative of this trend is the warning of Antonio Diaz Soto y Gama, in a recent article which appeared in *El Universal* (Mexico City). "The coming to a head of the present crisis," he declared, "has been clearly proving the direction in which abstract theorizing and adventuresome planning have been leading us, as well as enterprises based simply on good intentions with no thought of realities. . . . The first thing that all demand is a political policy of consideration and stability, which leans neither heavily to the right nor dangerously to the left, but maintains a position of just moderation imperiously required by a nation jolted and cruelly scourged by this crisis."

The significance of these words, in criticism of Cardenas revolutionary policies—coming from a man who is now supporting the candidacy of Almazan—can be realized only when it is remembered that, a few years ago, Soto y Gama acted as mentor to General Zapata and entered Mexico with a thundering rabble, in the conviction that to secure social justice "heads must roll."

Citizenship and Religion

The Institute of Human Relations is to meet at Williams College from August 27 to September 1; the meeting will be dedicated to this theme.

By **Reginald T. Kennedy**

CATHOLICS present at the Williamstown Institute of Human Relations will be more than well fortified and equipped to contribute their share to the development of the theme "Citizenship and Religion: a Consideration of American Policy with Regard to the Relations of Church and Synagogue to the State." The chief general purpose of the Institute, conducted by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, is to try to arrive at a common understanding of the important American community forces under consideration.

Because the Church is in the forefront of the battle to protect the rights of the individual against the encroaching powers of totalitarian states, Catholics will be able to make two major contributions: first, to present to the leaders of public opinion and to the public, through the press and the radio, the wealth of Catholic thought and experience on the subject; and second, to correct many of the erroneous opinions held by non-Catholics regarding the Catholic position.

The principles constantly reiterated are briefly: that all just authority comes from God, that man is a social being with duties and privileges, that without morality the state cannot endure and "the best and strongest support of morality is religion," that there is no true conflict between the powers of Church and state but rather that there is a necessary division of authority, and finally, that justice and charity must prevail in any right ordered society. Of course, the particular interest of Americans is centered on the bearing that the teaching of the Church has on our democratic form of government.

The antagonist of the Church can readily, but unjustly, damn the Church in the eyes of the American people by showing historically its friendship with forms of government unacceptable to us, its toleration of governments repugnant to the American concept of the state, and by adroitly lifting sentences from the text of the encyclicals. This has been done with some effectiveness in the past and today this menacing game is regaining its popularity. It is true that the Church condemns that theory of government which places all sovereignty in the people; however there is a clear and unmistakable distinction that even the careless but just reader can fully perceive. The theory it does reject is that sovereignty of the people, without any reference to God, is held to reside in the multitude. Pope Leo said that this is "doubtless a doctrine exceedingly well calculated to flatter and to inflame many passions, but which lacks all reasonable proof and all power of insuring safety and preserving order." If this false theory

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were accepted—and many modern screaming defenders of democracy have been attempting to foist it upon us—then the majority vote of the multitude would decide what is morally right and wrong, the minority would be deprived of its just rights and a rule of force and passion with the total destruction of the "inalienable rights" of the individual could "morally" be voted into power. This is contrary to the teaching of the Church, which insists that a democratic form of government, as well as a monarchical or any other form, must subscribe to a higher moral code, the law of God. This position was taken by the founders of the United States. And it has brought the Church into mortal combat with totalitarianism.

That the Church did not condemn the sovereignty of the people with reference to God is evident in the encyclical on the "Christian Constitution of States" in which Leo said, "No one of the several forms of government is in itself condemned, inasmuch as none of them contain anything contrary to Catholic doctrine, and all of them are capable, if wisely and justly managed, to insure the welfare of the state. Neither is it blameworthy in itself, in any manner, for the people to have a share, greater or less, in the government: for at certain times, and under certain laws, such participation may not only be of benefit to the citizens, but may even be of obligation."

In the 1928 presidential campaign political issues were confused by the injection of the issue of Church and state. Conferences and institutes, such as that at Williamstown, give Catholics an opportunity to clear the befogged issue.

The two powers in society

In the "Christian Constitution of States" Pope Leo points out that "the Almighty, therefore, has appointed the charge of the human race between two powers, the ecclesiastical and the civil, the one being set over the divine, and the other over human, things. . . . One of the two has for its proximate and chief object the well being of this mortal life; the other the everlasting joys of heaven." Leo returned to the subject in a later encyclical, "Chief Duties of Christians as Citizens," emphasizing the fact that "the supernatural love for the Church and the natural love of our own country proceed from the same eternal principle, since God himself is their Author and originating Cause." Nazis, communists, totalitarians or exaggerated nationalists have maliciously and wantonly confused the issue by pious assertions that they are willing to leave the preparation of man for eternity in the hands of the Church, but that his temporal affairs, with the definition left completely in their hands, belong to the management of the state.

With this theory the Church has no patience, although more often than not, to the detriment of the people, it has had to accept temporary defeat because the material forces of the state were superior to those of the Church. However, such states sow the seeds of their own dissolution and eventually, when the wreckage is cleared away, moral sympathy with its protection of the individual triumphs over the perverted interests of power-maddened rulers. The Church, in recognizing its own proper mission, the salvation of souls, claims that the temporal powers transgress their proper boundaries whenever in their direction of temporal affairs they resort to a government of force or seek to compel men to follow an immoral code, such as racism, communism or the complete subjugation of the spiritual to the temporal. In such cases, and the encyclicals constantly emphasize this point, the Church does not interfere with politics but rather politics deliberately interferes with the Church.

The Church admits that at times there may be an apparent conflict of authority between the spiritual and temporal but firmly believes that where truth, justice and charity prevail the issue will be peacefully settled. Here in the United States the Church authorities have been willing to submit such disputes to the courts of the land, having confidence in the justness of our laws and the integrity of the bench. It insists that there cannot be a true conflict between the spiritual and the temporal but rather that the just state will protect and aid the Church in its proper functions and that the Church on its part will inculcate a true patriotism among its followers. In the words of Leo, "The man who is at once a citizen and a Christian is not drawn aside by conflicting obligations."

President Roosevelt's message

The words of President Roosevelt in his message to Congress, January 4, 1939, when he said that religion was the first of the three institutions indispensable to Americans and that "Religion, by teaching man his relationship to God, gives the individual a sense of his own dignity and teaches him to respect himself by respecting his neighbors," were of the same spirit and breadth of vision as the words of Leo XIII, which have been re-echoed by Pius XI and Pius XII.

This emphasis on the relationship of man to God, and on the duties and responsibilities that men owe to each other, is constantly present in the teaching of the Church. The Church tirelessly repeats that a state respecting the rights of the Church and protecting it, whose leaders and people refer to the law of God and nature as their guide, that promotes and safeguards the status of the family and that protects the rights of the individual, will receive not only the benediction of God but also the love and devotion of its faithful citizens. It makes synonymous the

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love of the Church and of the just state. The essential duty of Christians is "to love both countries, that of earth below and that of heaven above, yet in such mode that the love of our heavenly surpass the love of our earthly home, and that human laws be never set above the divine law." Such a concept is essentially similar to the President's statement that religion is the source of "democracy and international good faith."

This article has only touched the highlights of the Church's teaching on citizenship and religion. Many readers familiar with Catholic writings on the subject will undoubtedly think that too many essential points have only been glossed over or ignored. It is impossible in a brief article to do even small justice to the insight of Catholic scholars into the relationship of Church and state. A fuller public explanation and treatment of the subject should be available at gatherings such as the Williamstown Institute of Human Relations. Prophetic warnings of modern evils, of fascism, communism, nazism, racism, false liberalism, exaggerated nationalism and centralization are contained in the encyclicals where all may read. The Pontiffs did not stop at warnings but proceeded to point out the essentials for all just governments.

It is only through misunderstanding and misinformation that non-Catholic Americans could fear the teachings of the Church. Rather should Americans of all creeds find inspiration and guidance in the encyclicals treating this theme. Conflict is almost unimaginable. If misunderstanding exists, the fault rests principally with Catholics—some, not all—who are either unfamiliar with the teachings of their Church or who have been loath to expound their beliefs and their relationship to the American scene to their fellow-citizens. They were in the mind of Leo when he said, "They moan over the loss of faith and the perversion of morals, yet trouble themselves not to bring any remedy; nay, not seldom, even add to the intensity of the mischief through too much forbearance or harmful dissembling."

Catholic philosophy is deeply imbedded in the Declaration of Independence and in the Constitution of the United States; in the middle period of our national existence an Orestes Brownson made a major contribution to American philosophy. It is incumbent upon American Catholics to continue the tradition of true patriotism by bringing the full light of Catholic teaching to our American scene, to the benefit of Catholic and non-Catholic alike. No finer inspiration could be found than by returning to a quotation from the encyclical on the "Chief Duties of Christians as Citizens": "Honor, then, to those who shrink not from entering the arena as need calls, believing and being convinced that the violence of injustice will be brought to an end and finally give way to the sanctity of right and religion!"

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

IT IS with considerable diffidence that I offer a few comments on the political situation created by the successful efforts of the Republican minority in the Congress, aided so decisively by about one-third of the Democratic majority, to stop the New Deal, at least to stop any further legislative development of the New Deal program. For I am conscious of my practical inexperience in politics and of my lack of knowledge and understanding of its intricate processes. However, I also think that most Americans share my predicament; but at the same time feel themselves entitled to express their opinions, or at any rate their emotions, on the political movements and events which affect them as taxpayers at least, even if they know in their hearts that for the information upon which they speak they are almost entirely dependent upon the press and the radio propaganda and the partisan views of the professional politicians and the professional commentators. Generally speaking, in times of comparative peace and prosperity, the average citizen takes little interest, except perhaps at election times, or during the excitement of a political scandal, in what goes on in the Congress at Washington, or the state political forums, or the city hall, or town meeting hall, of his native state and place of residence. But in times such as we now are living through, the real importance of politics is brought home even to the most indifferent citizens.

That fact has been emphasized in the most striking manner that has been witnessed in our country since the first election of President Roosevelt, by the action of the Congress in the last weeks of the recent session. Dorothy Thompson does not exaggerate, it seems to me, when she declares that the President "has suffered in Congress as complete a defeat as it is possible for the Chief Executive of a nation to suffer." Most of the newspaper comment which I have seen takes the same thing for granted, but, generally speaking, it also deals with the causes and possible results of Mr. Roosevelt's set-back in terms of political factors almost exclusively. That is to say, in terms of partisan politics; in speculating, for example, upon the damage which has been done to the Democratic Party's unity and strength and the increase in the power of the opposition party and, therefore, the bearing of these happenings upon the presidential election next year.

Upon such matters, I am only one of many Americans whose opinions, no matter how strong they may be, or how warmly expressed, are of little value, from a purely political point of view; but I do believe that our opinions have a great deal to do with the realities of our lives and fortunes which are today so much at the mercy of political forces. The great political struggle which culminated, for the present, in the halls of Congress last week, will be resumed when the Congress reassembles. In the meantime, it will be the discussion of that struggle, proceeding among the mass of the people everywhere, which will send the Senators and the Representatives back to the political

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arena—either confirmed in the now general opinion that President Roosevelt's policy has failed, and must be succeeded by a wholly different policy: or else convinced that the politicians who have defeated the President were themselves mistaken in reading the signs of the times and interpreting the will of the people. In other words, a great debate is now opened, outside Congress, among the people, the outcome of which will determine our national fate.

My own belief is that the defeat of the President in Congress, while very striking, and indicative of the fact that his policy has failed so far to satisfy the masses of the people—to whom the great test of any political policy now is the effect it has, or seems to have, upon their livelihood, was far indeed from being a defeat for the great social movement of which Mr. Roosevelt's political policies were merely the instruments by means of which he tried to respond in a practical manner to the desires of the great mass of the American people. The movement itself, of which the President became the leader, and which he most earnestly sympathized with, and desired to serve, is still very much alive.

It was a movement of repulsion away from the inhumane system of social struggle and exploitation of the masses by privileged classes and minorities of wealthy men for whom the politicians were pawns or tools, or willing servants. That system crashed much more completely than the New Deal—the effort to substitute a juster, more humane system in its place—crashed in the Congress last week. Any effort to bring it back into power again will, I believe, be worse for the nation than the worst results of all the mistakes of the New Deal. The movement toward social justice has not been completely satisfied—that is obvious—by the New Deal; but any movement back toward that which prevailed before the New Deal will clash with the awakened will of the masses of the people, and will be defeated in its turn. The real battle of the whole campaign for social justice will open when the Congress re-assembles, and the presidential election will be but an episode, not the determining point, in that battle. At any rate, that is how the situation appears to a non-political commentator.

Communications

NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: There are a great many things that can be said for and against the Soviet building at the World's Fair. I don't like it for purely architectural reasons; it's a bit, a big bit, of impudent architecture, very much like the man who would play tennis in tails. When the attacks on it are grounded upon the fact that the Soviet star tops nearly everything at the fair, then it would seem high time that Catholics take a realistic view of the situation. Let's admit once and for all that we Catholics missed a trick, and that the Stalinists caught a boat we could have caught. The fact of the matter is that we were in an excellent position to do something positive about having a real Catholic building at the World's Fair, and that we did not do it because of lack of imagination and initiative. I was a member of a group which drew up a plan whereby Catholic participation could have been positive, along the lines of the Pontifical Pavilion at the Paris Exposition. Attempts to interest Catholics were unsuccessful, despite the fact that excellent Catholic artists and architects offered their time and services free of charge. So if the only temple at the Fair is the Temple of Vacuum, let the blame rest with us. The fault lies not with the Soviets but with ourselves that Christ is not represented at the New York World's Fair.

MAURICE LAVANOUX.

THE FEDERAL THEATRE

Bondville, Vt.

TO the Editors: In his article on "The Federal Theatre" Mr. Grenville Vernon makes the challenging statement: "The world does not owe a living to those who act or paint or write." Is it the teaching of the Catholic Church that only the man blessed with physical skill or business acumen has a right to use his talents to make a living and that the man with creative ability has no right to exercise *his* God-given talents to make a living?

It would be interesting to know just how Mr. Vernon would set about finding that "unusual merit" which society should support. Speaking of those who act or paint or write he says: "All who are worth considering do these things because they love to do them. If they are not able to make a living by them, society should not be taxed to supply that living unless they produce something of unusual merit." History shows how seldom "unusual merit" is recognized in its own day. The art projects sponsored by our Federal Government offer the best opportunity in the history of art for "unusual merit" to receive contemporary appreciation. . . .

One wonders how destructive would be the results for the individual and for the country if remuneration were made only for work hateful to the worker. Surely the laborer, the craftsman and the financier no less than the artist "worth considering" love the things they do or they could not do them well. But sad experience has shown that one cannot live on love.

Has Mr. Vernon been touched by the Marxian dialectic when he deals the final blow saying that if artists do not produce something of unusual merit "they should enter other work, work that is materially productive"?

One wonders which accomplishes the greater permanent good, laborers constructing a concrete road (material product) in order to ease the passage for the tender rumps of capitalists, or actors producing a play to be seen for a quarter by many who could never otherwise afford to see a play. In the world today we see the results of governments forcing their citizens into work that is materially productive without thought of work that quickens the spirit of man.

If, even in comparatively few cases, relief succeeds in reconstructing the individual, then it has been worth all the taxes that support it. The New Deal made an effort in this direction when it tried to furnish every man according to his talents work which he "loved," for which he was fitted, in which he might feel a sense of achievement, a sense of existing as a human being in a world in which

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he has a definite function. In "The Ethics of Labor" Father Cuthbert, O.S.F.C., says: "The worker wants not merely to exist, but to live a human life and to find in his work the freedom to express and develop himself."

LUCY YOUNG FISK.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE CCC

Minneapolis, Minn.

TO the Editors: A few days ago there was called to my attention an article in THE COMMONWEAL of March 3, 1939, entitled "Christianity in the CCC."

Inasmuch as I have recently completed five years and six months with those boys as a commissioned chaplain, I was more or less dumbfounded at the conclusions of Mr. Paul Revere Waddell. During the first six months of my duty I had charge of seven camps; then for four years I served from eleven to seventeen camps and the last year I was supervisor of religious and welfare activities of all the camps in the district of Minnesota. As supervisor, I visited at least one camp each day and during these visits I learned much about the average enrollee.

Now these camps, or companies, had an average strength of 185 enrollees plus the army personnel, plus the strength of the "using agencies"—forestry, park, biological survey, soil erosion. The enrollees came from Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, Missouri and Kansas. For a time their average age ranged from eighteen to twenty-four and then from seventeen to twenty-three years. The above is the background of my experience.

Mr. Waddell draws his conclusions from his observations and experiences in one camp with twenty enrollees. My conclusions are decidedly different from his. I will admit that few of the enrollees may be able to write a treatise on God, man, morality, life, death. What can one expect from boys the majority of whom have never finished the eighth grade? Granting that Mr. Waddell's class of twenty boys (who were taking the practical subjects of journalism, advertising, salesmanship) were all high school graduates or even had some college work, does he expect to get a satisfactory treatise on theology or philosophy from the average boy?

I regret as much as Mr. Waddell that there is not a better and more thorough knowledge of God and the things of God to be found in our young men, but to class the CCC enrollees as Christless and Godless is not "shooting square." In practice I found the enrollee much more responsive to the call to receive the sacraments than I ever did in parish work. Many a time with the simple announcement made at mess, "Confessions tonight at 6:30," I found from eighty to ninety percent at confession and receiving Holy Communion next morning—these boys tumbling out of bed an hour earlier than usual—and this even in the winter, when forty below was not uncommon. This shows not an academic knowledge of Christ and the things of Christ, but a good sound practice of religion.

In November, 1937, I inaugurated a campaign for clean speech in the Minnesota district in which all denominations were included. The enrollees were asked to sign a pledge worded as follows: "I promise to refrain from all cursing, swearing, profane, vulgar and foul language," and within four months better than ninety-three percent of the entire members of the CCC in the forty-six camps of Minnesota signed the pledge and—better still—lived up to it. Many of them still keep this pledge today, though back in civilian life. Here were hundreds at least who brought the bad habit to the CCC and cured themselves during their time in camp.

As to morality among the CCC enrollees, well, it is a matter of record that there is less social disease found among them than in any other group in America. Now I am not trying to make out that the enrollees are all angels—I know them too well; but the vast majority is made up of God-fearing youngsters. Get to know these boys, their background, their past, their education, their hopes, their despairs, their ambitions and their reactions to the opportunities given in camp before condemning them. About two million young men have been in and out of the corps in the past six years, and surely no one will condemn that number of our youth as Godless or Christless.

Returning to the Catholic boys in the corps, does Mr. Waddell have any idea of the number who nightly recite their rosaries, or the number who will come to their chaplain and have Mass offered for a sick or dead chum, or a sick or dead relative, and, out of their five dollars per month, attempt to make an offering for the Mass? Now I am not a "publicity hound," but from actual experience I know these cases to be more or less common—and much more common than I found in college or parochial work.

The enrollees of the Civilian Conservation Corps seem to be the victims of too many who do not know these boys, and the criticisms leveled at them remind me of similar criticisms thrown at the men who served their country in 1917-18. Critics seem to forget that the membership of the corps is made up of a cross section of the boys of the nation, and as a priest, with over thirty years' experience in parish, school, army and CCC work, I ask, is it not time to "call" those who so insult and belittle the youth of America?

God bless those boys is the enduring prayer of

C. J. NORMOYLE,
Chaplain Res., U.S.A.

TRAGIC 1938

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: May I toss a small bouquet at Mr. Binsse for his constructive criticism (August 4) of the adulated Mr. Sheean's "Not Peace But a Sword"? His review is in a fine tradition of THE COMMONWEAL's. Captain Henry Longan Stewart, a British intelligencer in Italy during the war, and later one of the original COMMONWEALERS, broke many a lance pointing out the vicious effect of "fictionized" biography and history, then very popular. The form, in short, gave no check to the gullible on lying.

The new menace, as Mr. Binsse fairly and deftly points out, is alleged personal observation stuff which is in fact largely hearsay stuff of the "café politicos" and the wordage which any working newspaperman gets the habit of turning out by guess and by golly, with his fingers crossed and the pious hope he won't have to correct in a stop press.

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Sheean's books are popular because he has an "average reaction," one of the greatest spot news gifts a newsman can have. But just because it is in print and Sheean says it, or one of his con frères or sob soeurs, does not mean that it is so, and it is not anti-fascist, or pro nazi, or ipso red, to correct such statements as will bear correction, if one is a Harvard man, or knows one, and is interested in *Veritas*.

FRED MACDONALD-THOMPSON.

THE LITURGY IN ENGLISH

Waterbury, Conn.

TO the Editors: I notice that with the exception of Mr. Cort's interesting communication (June 9) there has been no response at all in the pages of THE COMMONWEAL to Mr. McEvoy's letter on the urgent necessity of reviving the use of the Missal. . . .

The reason for the need is simple. Liturgical prayers are the inspired prayers of the Church. They represent as such the vital quintessence of Christian culture. Formulated through the ages, these prayers, unexaggerated and free from sentimentalism, concern themselves not only with mercy (as is so frequently, even if legitimately, the case in popular forms of devotion and in much private prayer) but also with justice and truth. Particularly in those liturgical prayers which pertain to the Mass does the Christian (who uses his Missal) meditate on the great Christian virtues which must animate at least the Christian "remnant" of society if society itself is to endure: on such virtues as charity, chastity, love of one's enemies, etc. Before the Protestant and industrial revolutions, attendance at daily Mass was, as we know, the normal way for every Christian to begin the day. It is not surprising, therefore, that, as a great Benedictine priest has stated, less lofty heights of spirituality are attained to in modern times when daily Mass is the exception rather than the rule. The consequence of this despiritualizing is the chaotic condition of the modern world.

If daily Mass is out of the question for the great majority of Catholics in a world so seriously concerned with "making hay while the sun shines," probably it would be a step forward if, as Mr. McEvoy and Mr. Cort suggest, we do all in our power to revive the use of the Sunday Missal. If the people do not or cannot furnish themselves with Missals, why not print and hand out at Sunday Mass leaflets containing the prayers for the Proper of the Mass? A lector could read these prayers with the people at the proper time. I have been told that it would be very difficult for the celebrant, in accordance with Mr. Cort's suggestion, to accommodate his actions and prayers to the concomitant reading in English of the entire Mass. Why not then just read the prayers for the Proper? It would not be very important if the readings at first did not synchronize exactly with the prayers of the celebrant.

It is my conviction that there will be no appreciable amelioration of the social and economic woes of the modern world until the devotional life of the Church even distantly approximates the importance attached to genuine Catholic spirituality in ancient times and throughout the preponderant centuries of the middle ages.

JOHN J. FITZGERALD.

Points & Lines

No Place Like Home II

ALTHOUGH he places great stress on the fact that, by matrimony, "the souls of the contracting parties are joined and knit together more directly and more intimately than are their bodies," Pius XI in "Casti Connubii" emphasizes the procreative side of the Sacrament:

> Thus amongst the blessings of marriage, the child holds the first place . . . God wishes men to be born not only that they should live and fill the earth, but much more that they may be worshippers of God, that they may know Him and love Him and finally enjoy Him forever in Heaven.

At the same time the populations of the nations in the "Christian" world are either decreasing, or their rate of increase is flattening out. The case of France is notorious. According to the London *Tablet* the net reproduction rate (Kuczynski), in which unity represents a population that is maintaining itself, in various European countries is as follows:

> Austria, Belgium, England, France, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland all had rates below 0.8 in 1935. Other countries with rates below reproduction level were Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Holland, Eire, Italy, Poland and Spain were just above reproduction level. The Balkan countries, Portugal and the Ukraine had rates varying between 1.2 and 1.4, while the U.S.S.R. alone could claim a rate above 1.4. The population of the countries that can boast of a rate above unity may increase so long as no further fall in fertility takes place. But about this there can be no complacent feeling of security. Even in the south and east of Europe "fertility is declining and is likely to decline; it is probable that the net reproduction rates will fall to unity in south Europe within two decades." (A. M. Carr-Saunders, "World Reproduction," p. 135.)

In the United States the same state of affairs is rapidly developing. Said the National Resources Committee in its report (1938), "The Problems of a Changing Population":

> The idea that we are approaching an era of stationary or decreasing population comes as something of a shock to most Americans. The dividends of population expansion in America have naturally accrued in greatest measure to the owners of established enterprises and to persons of unusual initiative among those first on the scene. . . . Due to the rapidity with which the original population of the United States has increased, it is not commonly realized that the birth rate has been declining for nearly a century. Until recently its effects have been counterbalanced by a decided decrease in mortality rates, by heavy immigration of adults, and by the fact that there has been a large proportion of the females in the child-bearing age. It is evident, however, that since the mortality rate cannot decline indefinitely, and since immigration is now drastically restricted, the decline in the birth rate must soon outweigh the factors tending to increase the population and bring about a decline in annual increments of population growth. In fact this turning point was reached about 1925.

This should not be misinterpreted as meaning that our population is already declining; it merely means that the rate of growth has declined and the population is "flattening out." In the current *Catholic World* appears an inter-

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esting article on this subject by William Thomas Walsh:

> Just before the World War there were 333 eager young men in a certain class graduating from Yale College. The survivors of that class are now in their late forties. Take them all in all, they were pretty good specimens of manhood, most of them able-bodied, well nourished, of more perhaps than average intelligence—surely the very ones who, on the alleged premises of the birth controllers themselves, should have assumed a major part of begetting and rearing the next generation. What have these men contributed to the stream of human life on which the greatness and indeed the existence of America must depend?
>
> I have the statistics of this class before me as I write. Two hundred and fifty, or 80 percent, of the members have married during the intervening quarter of a century, five have been divorced, and one widowed. The married men and their wives constituted a group of 500 parents who have now for the most part reached the end of the age of childbearing. Those 500 men and women have brought into the world just 502 children, of whom 486 survive. The average number of children per marriage is 1.81+. These 500 Americans (Yale graduates and their wives) have not quite replaced themselves in the world, and doubtless never will.

O. E. Baker, writing in *Free America,* summarizes the present situation in America and hints at its long term results. Dr. Baker is probably the foremost authority in America on agricultural geography and farm population; his article forms part of a forthcoming book, "Agriculture in Modern Life."

> The urban people, particularly the middle class, are perishing—not the individuals, but the families—because of their failure to reproduce. The rural people are persisting. The modern urban philosophy of life, apparently, tends toward extinction; the rural philosophy of life tends toward survival. The urban philosophy of life evidently is ephemeral; the rural philosophy of life is derived, apparently, from the experience of the race accumulated through the ages. But it is obvious that if the rural people accept the urban philosophy of life, the rural people also will die out, and the hope of building a permanent civilization will perish. A great problem is how to hold to science and democracy, which have brought so much wealth and liberty and happiness into the world, yet avoid the biological consequences of the immensely widened opportunity to climb the economic and social ladder, for to probably a majority of the climbers, owing to conditions which have developed in the cities, children are an encumbrance.
>
> I expect that this problem will be solved primarily by the rural people and through a return to a more familistic civilization. . . .
>
> The people of the United States, indeed of most of the occidental world, are in the midst of a revolution more important, probably, in its implications than the Protestant Reformation or the "industrial revolution." Those revolutions did not affect deeply the institutions of the family, whereas the revolution in progress is affecting the family profoundly. The era of rapid increase of population that followed the discovery of coal as a source of power and its use in the steam engine, with associated development of the railroad, the steamship, factory production and electric power, the expansion of grain production onto the grasslands of the world and rapid advance in agricultural technique, has, apparently, reached its crest. European-American civilization has suddenly become mature.

These excerpts fairly well show the situation in the Western nations. They indicate that either the West is becoming less fertile for physiological reasons, or that the Christian concept of the family has been largely abandoned, or both. The steps taken by Italy and Germany to increase their power by increasing their populations are many and complicated. They include "marriage loans" designed to make it possible to set up a new home, direct and indirect family allowances from the state, prizes for large families, an attempt to deurbanize people by moving industry into the country, etc. Of course contraception and abortion are illegal. These measures have yielded widely publicized results, but it is too early to be able to say whether they have reversed (or increased) the former population trend.

England has become increasingly conscious of the problem. Two recent speeches in the House of Lords have attracted a great deal of attention. Here is a specimen of comment from the *Christian Democrat,* organ of the Catholic Social Guild:

> In the recent debate in the House of Lords on the prospective decline in the population of this country. . . . Lord Templemore deprecated the suggestion that a fall in numbers was imminent and flung out the suggestion that "there was a tendency to place upon the prophecies of eminent statisticians and mathematicians more objectivity than their authors would claim." If his speech meant anything at all, it meant that there was no real need for worry and that anyway the Government was not worrying. In an able letter to *The Times* (June 26), Mr. R. F. Harrod showed that a decline is certain to take place.

France has long interested herself mildly in the problem but now, with the threat of Germany, she is devoting major attention to it. As "Civis" says in *La Vie Intellectuelle,* the anti-clerical state is "discovering today that the 'curés,' or rather the Church, in guarding the spiritual life and defending natural morality were in fact preserving the very life of the nation." The New York *Times* describes the following recent legislation, which attempts to put real teeth in the laws safeguarding and encouraging the family:

> Today's cabinet meeting was given over largely to the discussion of eighty new decree laws, which will be approved tomorrow. Among them is the text in 402 articles of what the government intends to do to encourage larger families. About 9,000,000,000 francs will be appropriated in bonuses and credits partly drawn from the tax on bachelors and childless families and from the increase in the tax on alcohol.
>
> A bonus between 2,000 and 3,000 francs will be given for each first child.
>
> Special attention has been given to helping young peasants remain on the land by means of loans and a change in the inheritance law. If the oldest son has worked on the land since the age of 18 he will be entitled to a sum equivalent to ten times the amount of the wages he would have received as a laborer as the first claim before all other inheritors.
>
> Penalties for abortion and for the publication of obscene and pornographic literature will be doubled. . . .
>
> The adoption of children will be facilitated and an adopted child will receive equality in inheritance rights. The guardianship of natural children will also be made less complicated.

In view of all this activity abroad, it would not be surprising if we should begin to see agitation in this country for family allowances and particularly for marriage loans or even subsidies which would make possible earlier marriages than are now the rule. Almost certainly there will be increasing agitation outside as well as inside the Church to reduce the use of contraceptives and to prevent the performance of illegal abortions.

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The Screen

Fuss and Feathers—

IF MOVIE-GOERS must assist in the building of the British Empire, let them have films like Alexander Korda's new production, "Four Feathers." In stunning Technicolor, this English picture, directed by Zoltan Korda, sweeps by in a grand panorama of 1895 costumes, plumes with trailing dresses, bright red dress coats, pageantry, gallantry, gentlemen born to stuffy codes they must obey, the fall of Khartoum, Kitchener in the Sudan, Fuzzy-Wuzzies, white-robed Dervishes slaughtering the British to the last man, revenge, disguised spies, torture, the battle of Omdurman in full swing with the Coldstream Guards and County Regiments victorious, hurrah, Britannia rules! I have never been overly fond of A. E. W. Mason's story about the young Englishman who, haunted by fear and resenting the British campaigning abroad, has the guts to resign from his regiment. After his friends cruelly but perhaps justly send him the white feathers, the lad might have shown his courage in some other way than by chasing after them to Egypt and going through unbelievable feats just to prove a point. For one thing, he might well have flung the feathers into their smug faces. John Clements, who looks and acts like a regular fellow, plays the lead convincingly; and Ralph Richardson gives a fine performance as one of the friends and a rival for the hand of fair Ethne (June Duprez).

Bessie Breuer's novel, "Memory of Love," was considered "hot stuff" some ten years ago. "In Name Only," made from this book with less emphasis on the salacious and more on the divorce problem, builds up a strong case against the malicious wife who admittedly married only for money and social position. Kay Francis realistically makes this wife so thoroughly despicable by ingratiating herself with her husband's family that all sympathy is with the divorce-seeking husband. However, the heavy plot stumbles all over itself and dully gets nowhere; it could stop in the middle and avoid that old business of calling the "other woman" to the bedside of the husband stricken with pneumonia. John Cromwell's direction, Richard Sherman's intelligent dialogue and good acting throughout save this adult film from being a cheap, true-confession, triangle affair. Cary Grant warms up to those scenes in which bantering humor veils significant meaning; while Carole Lombard proves again her capacity for serious rôles.

Those who expect something scintillatingly smart from Elsa Maxwell are going to be disappointed with "Elsa Maxwell's Hotel for Women." Even Gregory Ratoff's direction fails to make anything unusual out of the shoddy story about the girl from Syracuse who comes to New York, lives at a hotel for women where she learns the ropes, becomes a ravishing model and gets into a mess with an old man. Linda Darnell, a newcomer with a face and figure, is surrounded by Ann Sothern and a bevy of girlies who look beautiful as they sit around and discuss clothes, men and life. Elsa Maxwell stalks in and out giving cocktail parties and advice on how to get along in a man's world.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

Maverick—Smith—Taft

In Blood and Ink, by Maury Maverick. New York: Modern Age Books. $.75.
Foundations of Democracy, Radio Debates by T. V. Smith and Robert A. Taft. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

MAURY MAVERICK, a former New Deal Congressman now serving as Mayor of San Antonio, has written a book in order to set forth his personal convictions on some of today's issues. The federal Constitution is its theme, and the title is the result of the author's belief that blood, as well as ink, was used in writing the document. There is much in the book that will have a popular appeal, but little that is novel or profound. Maury Maverick apparently believes that the Constitution was enacted in order to protect property rights, and that the Supreme Court, with no sufficient warrant, has made itself a super-legislature and the strongest influence in our government. To prove the former he quotes, as might be expected, Beard's arguments, without mentioning, for example, the work of Warren, which work makes Beard's position ridiculous and untenable. Statements of error are fairly numerous. Relative to Jefferson and the Louisiana Purchase, Maverick says that Jefferson "snapped it up." No reputable historian has come to that conclusion.

Although a Southerner, Maverick strongly criticizes the Dred Scott decision. He neglects, however, to show where, if at any point, the decision was technically in error. Maverick concludes that the court tried to maintain its superiority over the will of the people by that decision, and arrogated unwarranted power to itself. The hollowness of the Emancipation Proclamation is given the condemnation it deserves, and is set forth as the cheap political sham that it actually was. The unjustifiable, if not hypocritical, attitude taken by the Supreme Court toward the Fourteenth Amendment is well presented. The chapter on "Nine Gods or Nine Men" presents the arguments for lessening the now practically unlimited powers of the court, and making of it the agency that it was in the first decade of our national life.

The volume incorporating the recent radio debates between Smith of Illinois, a New Dealer, and Taft of Ohio, a conservative Republican, presents opposing points of view on thirteen topics, such as the Constitution, congress, the president, the courts, etc. The arguments of Smith will the more firmly establish the ardent exponent of the new order in his messianic mission; the statements by Taft will be as balm to those who know they dislike Roosevelt and all his works and pomps without knowing just why. Like all successful debaters, neither pays much attention, actually, to the arguments of the other. Smith feels little obligation to recognize any unwelcome facts; Taft is evidently convinced that any system not sponsored by the Republicans is destructive of the old American way of life. The discussion on the Wagner Act makes it appear that each of the major parties has been and is the uncompromising friend of labor. Smith cites irrefutable evidence to prove that the Labor Board is impartial. Taft then cites equally irrefutable evidence to show that the sinister influence of the CIO has directed the activity of the Labor Board, making it impossible for employers to secure fair treatment.

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Many queer reversals of party principles are evident, as one would expect, since the two major parties have exchanged many attitudes. In debating foreign relations, we find the Democrat urging a bold participation in world affairs, whereas the Republican, nurtured on the imperialism of early twentieth century Republicanism, is definitely for avoidance of foreign entanglements of all kinds. The discussion on the farm problem is one of the best in the book, and perhaps one of the most futile and inconclusive. Each shows how the party represented by the other has surreptitiously endeavored to ruin the farmer. Unbiased opinion will admit that such efforts have practically succeeded. In the chapter on "Thrift or Spending," Taft is at his best as he deals with the results of the expenditure of over twenty billion dollars since 1933 to restore prosperity. His factual statements on the possibility of inflation or national bankruptcy, while well reasoned, will perhaps receive no more attention from the average American than any other unwelcome truth. Smith after his usual fashion, pays little attention to the facts in the case, and practically concludes that no one should be concerned about the forty billion dollar national debt, since the government is still able to borrow money at low interest rates. If one tires of reading the arguments of Smith and Taft, he may turn to the appendix, which contains the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, Washington's Farewell Address, and similar monotonous but substantial fare.

PAUL KINIERY.

FICTION

Mr. Emmanuel, by Louis Golding. New York: Viking Press. $2.50.

LOUIS GOLDING'S new book will make him some money but it is no addition to the literature on fascism. To date fascism has had only one really good novel done about it, Ignazio Silone's "Fontamara." Silone is, of course, a far greater artist than Mr. Golding but, even so, it is annoying to find Mr. Golding trying to combine a modern fairy tale with an indictment of fascism. And one cannot help remembering what Clifton Fadiman said of Robert Nathan's "Road of Ages," to the effect that Mr. Nathan had treated with sweetness and light a subject (the enforced exile of the Jews) which demanded anything but those qualities in its treatment.

I have no objection to Mr. Golding's writing a modern fairy tale. There are few enough good fantasies done in our time. Robert Nathan has done some good ones and Norman Matson did perhaps the best of all some fifteen years ago in "Flecker's Magic." But Mr. Golding is old enough to be able to make up his mind as to just what he wants to do—be quaint, or condemn fascism. It seems to me that one cannot do both at the same time.

Old Mr. Emmanuel, the orthodox Jew from Magnolia Street in Dormington, England, is about as lovable a person as present-day fiction has produced. It is quite within the range of his really noble character to go into Germany to try to find out what had become of the mother of a half-Jewish refugee boy in England. Mr. Emmanuel is framed by the Nazis as a communist spy and is subjected to the usual tortures. His escape is wholly fortuitous and helps give the story its general lack of a convincing tone. Nor do I think that anyone as aged and feeble as Mr. Emmanuel could have survived even the expertly modulated tortures of his inquisitors.

It is refreshing, however, to find the hero of a book on fascism invoking the name of his God in his hour of need

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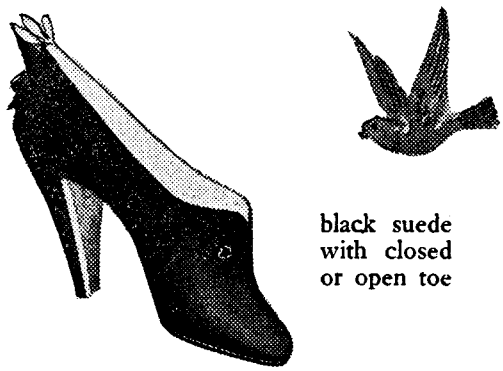

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instead of the concept of communism or man spelled with a capital M. Mr. Emmanuel dazedly intoning the psalms of the Old Testament through his smashed lips in his prison cell is about the only moving and convincing part of the whole book. Mr. Emmanuel knew that help could come from only one source. Mr. Golding, however, probably thought it was pretty cute and ironic to then have Mr. Emmanuel released through the intercession of the Jewish mistress of a Nazi official. So that by and large one cannot help wondering whether Mr. Golding in his mawkish attempt to combine two unrelated things wasn't simply making an attempt to fashion a best seller out of the current dislike for fascism and wasn't really interested in condemning fascism as such. It is either this or else Mr. Golding is inept. That is not one of the ways to fight facism. Nor is it the way to write a novel.

HARRY SYLVESTER.

Judas, by Eric Linklater. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.00.

OF THE FOUR evangelists, Matthew is the most generous with his information on Judas Iscariot, but even he contributes little. Hence Judas's life, family background and particularly his psychic impulses have been subjects for speculation through the centuries. With the publication of Linklater's "Judas," perhaps some of the speculation will cease, especially if all the novel's readers are as impressed and convinced of the plausibility of the character portrayal as this reviewer is.

Linklater, a writer of picaresque tales, satires, historical fiction, biography, poetry, etc., has submitted in "Judas" an analysis of the betrayer's intellectual and emotional processes, particularly during the first Holy Week. Through imagination tempered by judgment, through a sort of intuitive knowledge and a remarkable descriptive power, the author has managed to create a Judas who has vitality, dignity and plausibility. Curiously enough, the novelist's inclusion of two facts listed by Matthews, the betrayal kiss and the bribe, both lack the motivation and the dramatic punch some historically unestablished facts in the book possess. And occasionally some of the phraseology, for example "easy come, easy go" as applied to Mary Magdalen's spending of her income, struck this reviewer as somewhat out of key.

Judas is presented as an only son of wealthy parents, as a pathological pacifist and as a sensitive complex personality whose desideratum since childhood has been peace and quiet. When Jesus, whom he had followed for three years, threatened these things, Judas resorted to the treachery that branded him eternally.

Linklater's handling of the mob suggests a Greek chorus and also the theatrical acumen and understanding of a Max Reinhardt. His revelation of the workings of the Sanhedrin with its ruthless council members, his emphasis on the age-old feud between vested interests and have-nots, have present-day implications. The novel's sensuous descriptions, fast action and dramatic narrative combine to make "Judas" required reading.

ELISABETH ANN MURPHY.

HISTORY

Constitutionalism and the Changing World, by C. H. McIlwain. New York: The Macmillan Company. $4.50.

THIS WORK is a series of lectures and articles written or revised within the past five years. The subjects of sovereignty and fundamental law form the continuing themes that run through all the chapters. One may say of the author that there is no greater scholar writing in the English language today on the political theory of the middle ages. He is most painstaking in his translation of original documents and in his interpretation of the life and spirit of that time. To him the middle ages are ages of intense intellectual activity marked by the development of the political theory which forms the basis of our law and political institutions today. "This is the period," he says, "from which we can trace our own familiar institutions in a continuous development. It is the stage of growth immediately behind us, in which were laid the foundations on which our social and political fabric stands. Thus it is just because these institutions are so peculiarly our own and yet during their earlier growth so fundamentally different in character from what they have now become, that the temptation is so great to slur over the historical stages in their evolution."

Very important for Americans is his treatment of constitutionalism and judicial review which some authorities so cavalierly describe as American contributions to political thought and practice. Although in the details of operation in earlier centuries they do not resemble what we today would in every instance describe by these terms, they are in essence and in practical effects the same. Especially worthy of note and commendation is his extensive treatment of the development and significance of Magna Carta, which was not at its inception the guarantee of popular rights which it afterward came to be. Excellent too is his treatment of the limitations on royal power in the middle ages, when every king was bound by the customs of the people and the law of the land. Finally, in the concluding chapters which treat of the application of age-old theories to contemporary political problems, Professor McIlwain points out the distinction between limited authority and divided authority with special reference to the American system of checks and balances. Every political scientist knows that this system has within it germs of weakness which prevent the vigorous operations of authority in times of stress. He very properly contends: "But there can be no responsibility without power and there should be no power without responsibility. . . . The principle of the separation of powers, valid and necessary if restricted so as to mean merely the independence of the judiciary, when extended too far into the spheres of legislation and administration becomes a menace and an open invitation either to illegal usurpation or to actual revolution."

JEROME G. KERWIN.

The War Behind the War: 1914-1918, by Frank P. Chambers. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.75.

A CANADIAN historian reviews the political history of the World War. Though the attempt is an ambitious one, Mr. Chambers manages by the exercise of scholarly prudence to provide an outline considerable better than any other book I know in the same field. His book combines lucid method with a rich deposit of factual material. It is, therefore, a valuable addition to the student's library on contemporary history. The peril to which the writer of such a survey is of course most exposed is that the inevitable need for condensation will leave out of the sentence into which comment on any one matter must be compressed that nuance which makes historical statement objective and just. Thus one turns to the first page and reads this about Franz Ferdinand: "He

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was a proud, hard man, disdaining popularity, tactless and bigoted." This, being all that Mr. Chambers says, renders unnecessarily black the character of a prince who serious and martial by nature, but who saw many things realistically, possessed courage and energy, and yet was an intelligent amateur of the arts. What is said of the behavior of German Social Democracy at the outbreak of the War (p. 127) is not the whole story by any means; and the account of Erzberger (p. 352) is unnecessarily prejudiced. On the other hand, Mr. Chambers often succeeds brilliantly, for example when he discusses the political changes which in France accompanied the varying fortunes of battle. His biblography is excellent, bearing in mind his purpose, and the presentation is aided by a clear and careful style. If a new edition takes advantage of comments likely to be made by specialists who review the book, we shall have a survey likely to remain a standard manual on a period which no student of modern history will be tempted to ignore. I suggest that the maps which accompany the text could be notably improved.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

MEMOIRS

Country Lawyer, by Bellamy Partridge. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company. $2.75.

THE ADVANCE of industrialism in America marked the decline of the country town. The telephone, automobile, movies and newspaper syndicates spelled the end of those local customs, modes of thought and expression which gave to the country town its own peculiar flavor and atmosphere. But when the author's father settled in Phelps, a country town in western New York, soon after the Civil War, the country town still possessed its unmistakable individuality. Very few of the inhabitants knew any other world than the town in which they were born, lived and died, and even the natives from nearby towns were considered "furriners." A trip to the city was an expensive affair; if a boy left for the city, he was pitied by the folks because there was no job for him in the home town. It was into such a place that a young married man came from Rochester upon his admission to the bar. He brought with him a wife, a baby, $1,000, a love of country life, some knowledge of the law and a firm determination to make a livelihood in the practice of the law. "Country Lawyer" relates incidents and experiences that occurred to the country lawyer during his fifty-odd years of practice in Phelps. The book tells how he guided his neighbors, solved their problems, settled their disputes, arranged their affairs and acted as a lay father confessor.

An especially funny tale is the one about the minister who organized the whole town into a battalion of prayer. It seemed that the area surrounding the town was hit by a drought that was ruining the crops and drying up the springs and lakes upon which the town depended. One of the ministers got the idea that it would be a good thing for the whole town to devote a certain time of an appointed day collectively to pray for rain. The rains did come, but not alone. Along with them came thunder and lightning, which did damage to property of the town's miser and cantankerous livestock trader. An action was started by this shady dealer against the minister for damages on the ground that the lightning was caused by the minister's crusade of prayer. The account of how the country lawyer wins judgment for the minister and frustrates the town crank is but one of the excellent things in store for the book's readers.

JOSEPH CALDERON.

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The Inner Forum

"POVERTY, cold, hunger, unemployment and resulting sickness are giving men little or no opportunity to work for their soul's salvation, are embittering them, poisoning their minds and hearts, turning them against religion and making dangerous radicals of many who could be useful members of society. The degradation of their poverty and the inhuman conditions under which they live make many of them vicious and arouse in them a violence of passion which seems beyond control." This observation by Archbishop McNicholas was quoted by Father Hugh R. Donohue of St. Patrick's Seminary, Menlo Park, California, in a speech before the convention of the Catholic Central Verein and its auxiliary the National Catholic Women's Union, held in San Francisco from July 29 to August 2. Archbishop Mitty, Bishop Buddy and Bishop Muench spoke before the convention.

The establishment of maternity guilds in every parish is one of the objects of the National Catholic Women's Union. The purpose of the maternity guild is to see to it that the birth of a child does not involve an inordinate strain on the family finances. Each member of the guild (who is also a member of the parish) regularly contributes a modest fee to the guild. In return the mother receives training on baby care, pre-natal and post-natal medical treatment; all hospital expenses also are borne by the parish maternity guild.

The Catholic Central Verein is the oldest Catholic men's organization in this country. It was founded in 1855 at a convention of German Catholic Societies in Baltimore to counteract the influence of the Know-Nothing movement and the activities of groups seeking to estrange Catholics from their Church. It rendered assistance to German Catholic immigrants, helped establish churches and schools and it was due to its efforts that the first Catholic normal school was founded in St. Francis, Wisconsin. The Central Verein was also a pioneer in the study of the Christian viewpoint on the social question. Its approach to the problems affecting society can be characterized as revolutionary and papal. Judging from its publications, the Central Verein seeks the realization of the corporative order as distinct from the corporative state (which is fascism), an order that really respects the rights of God and His Church, that is pacific and democratic, wherein all citizens both employers and workers are organized from the ground up (and not by direction from above) in parallel syndicates for their mutual benefit and the good of the community. The Verein operates the St. Elizabeth settlement and Day Nursery in St. Louis where it has its headquarters. Its scholarly *Central Blatt and Social Justice* appears every month.

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